



# The Firefighter Health Rescue Case Study

Firefighting is dangerous work. But the number one killer of on-the-job firefighters isn't trauma, it's heart disease. In fact, firefighters are *three times* more likely to have a heart attack on the job than the general population.

A Minnesota fire department is committed to beating those odds. Frustrated that other wellness programs did not address the unique needs of firefighters, the department partnered with Step One to try a different kind of worksite wellness, one that incorporated a targeted nutrition intervention.

**OBJECTIVE** Protect those who protect others when they need it the most. Phase One of the project ran throughout the holiday season when the incidence of heart health complications is highest.

**UNIQUE CHALLENGE** Employee engagement around diet & nutrition because those wellness components typically have lower participation rates than other corporate wellness initiatives.

**THE PROGRAM** The Program was timed to start with annual physicals, and included heart health education with an emphasis on targeted condition-specific nutrition.

All firefighters could voluntarily use Step One Foods twice a day with repeat laboratory evaluation offered at the end of 30 days. No other controls were in place, and exercise and other diet decisions were left to individual firefighters. This provided a real world pilot in a real workplace, not a research laboratory.

## THE RESULTS

**84%** participation rate

compared to

- 10% weight loss
- 7% smoking cessation
- 21% fitness

**86%** saw measurable

health improvements in 30 days

**6pt** average increase in HDL cholesterol

- Hardest to change
- Does not typically respond to medication
- Every 1 pt increase = 3% reduction in heart disease risk

**73%** were inspired

to make additional improvements to their diets

[steponefoods.com](http://steponefoods.com)